

Southeast Asia Seminar Evaluation

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The effectiveness of the Southeast Asia study group indicated to me the need for a continuing orientation program of this kind. Most of us need the factual background and political and cultural perspectives so well provided by this course. The lecturers, well selected, had impressive knowledge in their fields and organized their material clearly.  a brilliant speaker, added greatly to the course by his personal experiences and wide travels in Southeast Asia.

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The course had its failings. Its weaknesses were in the planning and organization of classes and some confusion over methods of presentation. Many students, for example, had hoped that discussion periods would be included in the daily 2-hour sessions. For the most part, there was no opportunity to ask questions or exchange viewpoints until the last week of the course. Many students understood "seminar" to imply both lecture and discussion.

Speakers and students alike were confused over organization of the course, particularly during the last week, when nobody knew how long the seminars were to run or whether a final review session was scheduled. The course, I think, ran less than a month and the anticipated review class never materialized.

I would suggest a clear prospectus for the course and, if possible, a revision of the schedule. This should improve attendance and broaden the inherent appeal of the course.

Fridays are a difficult day for classes. Better attendance might result if the course were lengthened one week and conducted four days a week, Mondays through Thursdays, to appeal to weekend travelers. Comments already have been made on the meeting room, which may have been as unavoidable as the hot weather.

I hope such seminars will continue and that the speakers will be as excellently chosen.

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